

REMARKS

The following remarks are believed responsive to the points raised by the Office Action dated April 25, 2007 and discussed during the interview with Examiners McNally and Aftergut on June 20, 2007.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-14 remain pending; claim 34 is added by this amendment.

Applicant's attorney would like to thank the Examiners for their careful consideration of the arguments presented during the interview and appreciates the courtesy shown her. At the interview, Applicants' attorney discussed the nature and advantages of the present invention. The disclosures of the cited references were also discussed. The claims have been amended in the manner discussed at the interview, so as to more particularly set out Applicants' invention.

More specifically, it was submitted that U.S. Patent No. 4,007,312 to Stofko et al. teaches bonding lignocellulosic material using an oxidizing agent to form laminated products and teaches that pressures *exceeding that at which the lignocellulosic material is crushed should not be used* (see e.g., Stofko column 4, lines 7-12). More specifically, Stofko teaches that a suitable pressure range is 60 to 300 psi (column 4, line 20).

U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0098117 to Vadars is directed to forming a consolidated article having contoured surfaces and a *uniform density*. Vadars teaches that compressing panels to be deeply contoured (i.e., having thinner areas of higher density) can be problematic and teaches that instead panels should be compressed to maintain a uniform density and machined to produce a non-uniform caliper.

Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art reading Stofko et al. which teaches away from using pressures higher than 300 psi and crushing the lignocellulosic material and Vadars which teaches compressing panels to a non-uniform density is problematic would not be led to fuse first and second boards by compressing the boards through the application of heat and pressure, let alone, to use pressures of about 400 to about 850 psi, and form high-density and low-density portions.

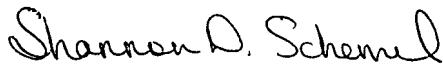
Examiners McNally and Aftergut agreed that the combination of Stofko et al. and U.S. Patent Application Publication 2003/0098117 to Vadars fails to disclose or suggest fusing wood composite boards by compressing the boards in a mold cavity through the application of heat and a pressure of about 400 to about 850 psi. Applicants proposed

amending the existing claims to include this aspect. Examiners McNally and Aftergut agreed such claims would be allowable over this art.

It is believed this response summarizes all the issues discussed during the interview. In view of the amendment and remarks recited herein, the application is considered in good and proper form for allowance, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,



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